

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AEC-05 CIAE-00 H-01 INR-05 IO-10 L-02 NSAE-00

OIC-02 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-03 PRS-01 SAJ-01 SAM-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 TRSE-00 RSC-01 NSC-05 ACDA-05 ISO-00

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6516

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USDEL MBFR VIENNA

S E C R E T BONN 18461

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MARR, NATO, GW

SUBJECT: MBFR: INITIAL THINKING IN BONN TO EASTERN

PROPOSAL FOR MANPOWER FREEZE

1. FONOFF MBFR DIRECTOR DR. RUTH INVITED EMBOFF TO CALL TODAY TO DISCUSS THE NOVEMBER 26 EASTERN PROPOSAL FOR A MANPOWER FREEZE. RUTH INDICATED THAT THE PROPOSAL WAS UNACCEPTABLE AND CONTAINED MANY PITFALLS. HE SAID SECRET

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THE EASTERN PROPOSAL PRESENTS THE WESTERN PARTICIPANTS

WITH AN OPPORTUNITY TO CONSIDER HOW THEY MIGHT BEST TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS OPPORTUNITY. RUTH BELIEVES THE EAST WILL BE SORELY TEMPTED TO PLAY TO PUBLIC OPINION WITH ITS LATEST MOVE, BUT THAT WE SHOULD BE PREPARED - PUBLICLY AND AT THE NEGOTIATING TABLE - TO TURN THE PROPOSAL TO OUR OWN ADVANTAGE.

2. RUTH AND HIS STAFF HAVE BEEN DOING SOME PRELIMINARY THINKING AS TO THE BEST WESTERN TACTICS FOR RESPONDING TO THE EAST. BESIDES REJECTING THE PROPOSAL OUTRIGHT, HE SEES TWO OTHER POSSIBLE GENERAL RESPONSES. FIRST, THE WEST COULD PROPOSE A COUNTER-MORATORIUM. HOWEVER, IN DOING SO, THE WEST SHOULD USE SUCH A PROPOSAL TO START A DATA DISCUSSION. THE PROPOSAL SHOULD ALSO ESTABLISH THE PRINCIPLE OF GLOBAL NUMBERS AND THE IDEA OF A COLLECTIVE WESTERN RESPONSE. SECOND, THE WEST COULD RESPOND WITH A NON-INCREASE OF FORCES OFFER FOR A SPECIFIC LIMITED DURATION. HOWEVER, THE NON-INCREASE OFFER WOULD BE LINKED TO CONCRETE AND SUBSTANTIVE REDUCTION RESULTS. MOREOVER, THE WEST WOULD HAVE TO REITERATE THE POINT ABOUT HUNGARY WHICH WAS MADE DURING THE MARCH 14 PLENARY SESSION. THE OFFER SHOULD ALSO INCORPORATE THE IDEA OF THE EXISTING DISPARITY OF FORCES.

3. FROM A TACTICAL STANDPOINT, RUTH TENDS TO BELIEVE IT WOULD BE BETTER FOR THE WEST TO RESPOND ACTIVELY TO THE LATEST EASTERN INITIATIVE. HE SEES THE PROPOSAL AS OFFERING THE WEST A TOOL WHICH COULD BE USED TO OBTAIN EASTERN FORCE LEVEL DATA. HE SAID THAT THE US APRIL 30, 1973 PAPER CONTAINS A CLEAR STATEMENT REGARDING A FORCE LIMITATION AGREEMENT, PRESENTING BASICALLY A RATHER SKEPTICAL APPRAISAL OF SUCH A POSSIBILITY. HE BELIEVES THIS ASSESSMENT SHOULD BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION IN FORMULATING THE WESTERN RESPONSE. FINALLY, RUTH BELIEVES THAT THE WESTERN RESPONSE SHOULD BE AS LITTLE FORMALIZED AS POSSIBLE, MENTIONING IN THIS CONNECTION A POSSIBLE NATO STATEMENT TO BE ISSUED FOLLOWING THE DECEMBER MINISTERIAL.

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